

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8678

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: BTRA, EEWT, EGEN, PFOR

SUBJECT: QUERIES ON AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN VISITS TO HANOI

REF: HONG KONG 8244

1. AS WE MORE OR LESS EXPECTED, WIDE PUBLICITY SAUBOLLE OBTAINED FOR HIMSELF AND BANK OF AMERICA TRIGGERED SOME INQUIRIES BY US BUSINESSMEN AS TO WHAT THEY MIGHT DO ALONG SIMILAR LINES TO OPEN UP RELATIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE. MOST OF THESE WERE QUITE NATURALLY AIMED AT REESTABLISHING CONTACT WITH SAIGON RATHER THAN THE NORTH. HOWEVER, ONE OR TWO HAVE ASKED ABOUT MAKING A JOURNEY TO HANOI.

2. RICHARD FREYTAG, A VICE PRESIDENT OF FNCB STATIONED HERE, CAME IN THE OTHER DAY WITH AN INFORMAL REQUEST FOR ADVICE ON WHETHER IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR FNCB TO MAKE A GESTURE TO HANOI BY SENDING SOMEONE THERE, POSSIBLY EVEN FREYTAG GOING HIMSELF. FREYTAG EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS JUST "WONDERING" ABOUT THIS ON HIS OWN AND WAS NOT PRESSING IN ANY WAY BUT WOULD LIKE MY ADVICE. I TOLD HIM THAT THERE WERE OBVIOUS HIGH POLICY ASPECTS INVOLVED WHICH COULD ONLY BE ANSWERED IN WASHINGTON AND I WOULD SEEK GUIDANCE.

3. FREYTAG IS A BROAD-GUAGED, SOPHISTICATED MODERN BREED BANKER WHO WOULD AVOID PUBLICITY AND FOR THAT REASON WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER "FIRST US BANKER IN HANOI" THAN
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SAUBOLLE. HOWEVER, HE COULD STILL BE HELPFUL IF DEPARTMENT WOULD

WISH TO DO ANYTHING ALONG LINES PARA 5 REFTEL. IN ANY
CASE, ADVICE TO FREYTAG SHOULD BE PRECISE AS TO WHETHER
OR NOT TO GO AT ALL AND CAPABLE OF BEING USED WITH OTHERS
WHO WILL BE FOLLOWING ON WITH SIMILAR REQUESTS.
DEPENDING ON DEPARTMENT'S ANSWER, ADVICE SHOULD INCLUDE
INSTRUCTIONS ON WHAT TO DO ABOUT FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROLS,
PASSPORTS, ETC. WE BELIEVE SAUBOLLE USED HIS FRENCH
PASSPORT BUT FREYTAG DOESN'T HAVE THAT OPTION.
CROSS

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